

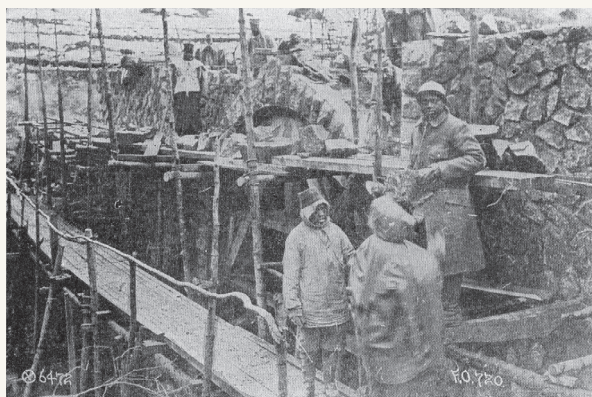
# 369<sup>TH</sup> IN FRANCE



**Regiment band performing at Auteuil, France.**  
Image courtesy of Kelly Miller's *History of the World War for Human Rights*

On December 27, 1917, excitement radiated among the regiment as they made the treacherous journey to France. Their hopes were destroyed when the 15<sup>th</sup> was used as a labor unit for building roads and docks while the band performed ceremonial concerts at hospitals, camps, etc. Traveling throughout France, Europe's jazz compositions boosted morale and captured the American and French audiences alike.

However, members of both the band and the regiment feared the war would end without ever seeing combat. Due to their devastating casualties in battle, the French increased pressure on the American Expeditionary Forces to provide more troops. Three months later in March of 1918, the regiment joined the French Army as the 369<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the United States.



**African American soldiers were not initially used as combat forces but as labor soldiers, building roads and docks.**  
Image courtesy of Kelly Miller's *History of the World War for Human Rights*



**Lieutenant James Reese Europe conducting at Hotel Tunis, Paris ca. 1919.**  
Image courtesy of the Library of Congress.